

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:*

**Listing of Claims:**

**Claim 1 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus comprising:

a data allocation module that divides print data, which is generated by an application program and is an object to be printed, by page and specifies information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and

a data output control module that outputs the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said data allocation module, said distributed printing control apparatus being capable of printing multiple copies of the print data according to a requirement,

wherein said data allocation module arranges pages included in each copy in a sequence of the pages, divides all the pages of the multiple copies into the number of the multiple printers specified as destinations of distribution, and allocates respective divisions to the multiple printers, and

said data output control module carries out the distributive output of the print data to the multiple printers in a substantially parallel manner, ~~said data output control module converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as the destination of distribution and then performing each distributive output~~ each distributive output having a convert process and a transmit process by each page, the convert process converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as a destination of distribution, the transmit process transmitting the converted print data.

**Claim 2 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 1, said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:

a virtual printer driver storage module that stores a virtual printer driver for specifying information on a virtual printer corresponding to the multiple printers; and

an intermediate print data generation module that executes the virtual printer driver and thereby obtains intermediate print data, which is adequate for the virtual printer, from ~~an~~ the application program that generates source data of the print data,

wherein the intermediate print data thus obtained is specified as the print data used in said data allocation module and said data output control module.

**Claim 3 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus comprising:

a data allocation module that divides print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifies information representing pages allocated to multiple printers;

a data output control module that ~~outputs~~ distributes the print data ~~in a distributive manner~~ to each of the multiple printers according to the information specified by said data allocation module and outputs the distributed print data to each of the multiple printers via a printer driver corresponding to a type of each printer;

and a printer speed performance detection module that ~~detects~~ collects information with regard to performances of the multiple printers as destinations of distribution from the printer driver and decides a performance on a printing speed of each of the multiple printers from the collected information of performances of the multiple printers,

wherein said data allocation module specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers according to the performance on the printing speed of each printer ~~detected~~ decided by said printer speed performance detection module.

**Claim 4 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 3, said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:

a distribution information setting module that causes an input window to be displayed on a display device and sets various pieces of information regarding distribution of the print data based on input data from an input device,

wherein said data allocation module specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers, based on the various pieces of information set by said distribution information setting module, and

said distribution information setting module comprises a display control module that generates an illustrated image, which includes an arrangement of printing media and corresponds to the information specified by said data allocation module, based on the various pieces of information and causes the illustrated image to be displayed on said display device.

**Claim 5 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus for printing print data to be printed in multiple sets comprising:

a setting module that receives instructions from a user and determines whether or not multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions;

a data allocation module that, when the setting module determines that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, allocates the print data to be printed in multiple sets to a single printer divides print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifies information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and

a data output control module that, when the setting module determines that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, outputs the print data to be printed in multiple sets to the single printer such that each copy or each set of identical pages is printed with an identical printer in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said data allocation module;

~~wherein said data allocation module specifies number of pages to be allocated to each of the multiple printers, such that each specified set of pages are printed with an identical printer.~~

**Claims 6-9 (Canceled).**

**Claim 10 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control method, comprising the steps of:

(a) dividing print data, which is generated by an application program and is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and

(b) outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified in said step (a), said distributed printing control method being capable of printing multiple copies of the print data according to a requirement,

wherein said step (a) arranges pages included in each copy in a sequence of the pages, divides all the pages of the multiple copies into the number of the multiple printers specified as destinations of distribution, and allocates respective divisions to the multiple printers, and

said step (b) carries out the distributive output of the print data to the multiple printers in a substantially parallel manner, ~~said step (b) converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as the destination of distribution and then performing each distributive output~~ each distributive output having a convert process and a transmit process by each page, the convert

process converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as a destination of distribution, the transmit process transmitting the converted print data.

**Claim 11 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control method that is capable of printing multiple copies of print data according to a requirement, said distributed printing control method comprising the steps of:

(a) dividing the print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers;

(b) ~~outputting~~ distributing the print data ~~in a distributive manner~~ to each of the multiple printers according to the information specified in said step (a) and outputting the distributed print data to each of the multiple printers via a printer driver corresponding to a type of each printer; and

(c) collecting information with regard to performances of the multiple printers as destinations of distribution from the printer driver and ~~detecting~~ deciding a performance on a printing speed of each of the multiple printers from the collected information of performances of the multiple printers,

wherein said step (a) specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers according to the performance on the printing speed of each printer ~~detected~~ decided in said step (c).

**Claim 12 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control method for printing print data to be printed in multiple sets, comprising the steps of:

receiving instructions from a user and determining whether or not multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions;

when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, allocating the print data to be printed in multiple sets to a single printer; and

when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, outputting the print data to be printed in multiple sets to the single printer such that each copy or each set of identical pages is printed with an identical printer

~~(a) dividing print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and~~

~~(b) outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified in said step (a);~~

~~wherein said step (a) specifies number of pages to be allocated to each of the multiple printers, such that each specified set of pages are printed with an identical printer.~~

**Claim 13 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in which a computer program used in a distributed printing control apparatus is recorded, said computer program causing print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers, and said computer program including program instructions for causing a computer to attain perform the functions of:

(a) dividing print data, which is generated by an application program and is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and

(b) outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said function (a),

wherein said function (a) arranges pages included in each copy in a sequence of the pages, divides all the pages of the multiple copies into the number of the multiple printers specified as destinations of distribution, and allocates respective divisions to the multiple printers, and

said function (b) carries out the distributive output of the print data to the multiple printers in a substantially parallel manner, each distributive output having a convert process and a transmit process by each page, the convert process converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as a destination of distribution, the transmit process transmitting the converted print data ~~said function (b) converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as the destination of distribution and then performing each distributive output.~~

**Claim 14 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 13, wherein said computer program includes program instructions that further causes the computer to attain perform the functions of:

(c) providing in advance in a storage device a virtual printer driver for specifying information on a virtual printer corresponding to the multiple printers; and

(d) executing the virtual printer driver and thereby obtaining intermediate print data, which is adequate for the virtual printer, from ~~an~~ the application program that generates source data of the print data,

the intermediate print data obtained by said function (d) being specified as the print data used for said functions (a) and (b).

**Claim 15 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in which a computer program used in a distributed printing control apparatus is recorded, said computer program causing print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers, said computer program including program instructions for causing a computer to ~~attain~~ perform the functions of:

(a) dividing the print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers;

(b) ~~outputting~~ distributing the print data ~~in a distributive manner~~ to each of the multiple printers according to the information specified by said function (a) and outputting the distributed print data to each of the multiple printers via a printer driver corresponding to a type of each printer; and

(c) collecting information with regard to performances of the multiple printers as destinations of distribution and ~~detecting~~ deciding a performance on a printing speed of each of the multiple printers from the collected information of the performances of the multiple printers,

wherein said function (a) specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers according to the performance on the printing speed of each printer ~~detected~~ decided by said function (c).

**Claim 16 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 15, wherein said computer program includes program instructions that further causes the computer to ~~attain~~ perform the function of:

(d) causing an input window to be displayed on a display device and setting various pieces of information regarding distribution of the print data based on input data from an input device,

said function (a) specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers, based on the various pieces of information set by said function (d), and

said function (d) comprises:

the function of generating an illustrated image, which includes an arrangement of printing media and corresponds to the information specified by said function (a), based on the various pieces of information and causing the illustrated image to be displayed on said display device.

**Claim 17 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in which a computer program used in a distributed printing control apparatus for printing print data to be printed in multiple sets is recorded, ~~said computer program causing print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers~~, said computer program including program instructions for causing a computer to attain perform the functions of:

receiving instructions from a user and determining whether or not multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions;

when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, allocating the print data to be printed in multiple sets to a single printer; and

when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions, outputting the print data to be printed in multiple sets to the single printer such that each copy or each set of identical pages is printed with an identical printer

~~(a) dividing print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and~~

~~(b) outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said function (a);~~

~~wherein said function (a) specifies number of pages to be allocated to each of the multiple printers, such that each specified set of pages are printed with an identical printer.~~

**Claims 18-21 (Canceled).**

**Claim 22 (Currently Amended):** A computer program product used for use in a distributed printing control apparatus that causes print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers, said computer program product comprising ~~causing a computer to attain the functions of:~~

a recording medium having program code recorded therein, said program code including

(a) program code for dividing print data, which is generated by an application program and is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and

(b) program code for outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said ~~function~~ program code (a),

wherein said ~~function~~ program code (a) arranges pages included in each copy in a sequence of the pages, divides all the pages of the multiple copies into the number of the multiple printers specified as destinations of distribution, and allocates respective divisions to the multiple printers, and

said ~~function~~ program code (b) carries out the distributive output of the print data to the multiple printers in a substantially parallel manner, each distributive output having a convert process and a transmit process by each page, the convert process converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as a destination of distribution, the transmit process transmitting the converted print data ~~said function (b) converting the print data of each page, sequentially from a head page of each division, to a format suitable for each printer specified as the destination of distribution and then performing each distributive output.~~

**Claim 23 (Currently Amended):** A computer program product used for use in a distributed printing control apparatus that causes print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers, said computer program product comprising ~~causing a computer to attain the functions of:~~

a recording medium having program code recorded therein, said program code including

(a) program code for dividing the print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers;



(b) program code for distributing ~~outputting~~ the print data in a distributive manner to each of the multiple printers according to the information specified by said ~~function~~ program code (a) and outputting the distributed print data to each of the multiple printers via a printer driver corresponding to a type of each printer; and

(c) program code for collecting information with regard to performances of the multiple printers as destinations of distribution from the printer driver and deciding ~~detecting~~ a performance on a printing speed of each of the multiple printers from the collected information of performances of the multiple printers,

wherein said ~~function~~ program code (a) specifies the pages allocated to the multiple printers according to the performance on the printing speed of each printer ~~detected~~ decided by said ~~function~~ program code (c).

**Claim 24 (Currently Amended):** A computer program product ~~used for use~~ in a distributed printing control apparatus for printing print data to be printed in multiple sets that causes print data, which is an object to be printed, to be distributed to and printed with multiple printers, said computer program product comprising ~~causing a computer to attain the functions of:~~

a recording medium having program code recorded therein, said program code including

program code for receiving instructions from a user and determining whether or not multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions;

program code for allocating the print data to be printed in multiple sets to a single printer when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions; and

program code for outputting the print data to be printed in multiple sets to the single printer such that each copy or each set of identical pages is printed with an identical printer when it is determined that multiple printers should be prohibited from printing one copy or one set of identical pages in accordance with the user's instructions

~~(a) dividing print data, which is an object to be printed, by page and specifying information representing pages allocated to multiple printers; and~~

~~(b) outputting the print data in a distributive manner to the multiple printers according to the information specified by said function (a);~~

~~wherein said function (a) specifies number of pages to be allocated to each of the multiple printers, such that each specified set of pages are printed with an identical printer.~~

**Claim 25 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus that controls distributed printing, comprising and comprises:

a printer specification module that specifies multiple printers as destinations of distribution; ~~and~~

a distributive output module that outputs print data, which is an object to be printed, to the multiple printers specified by said printer specification module in a distributive manner; ~~[[,]]said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:~~

a condition setting module that causes a data input box for setting a predetermined condition relating to a printing performance of each printer to be displayed on a display device, receives input data into the data input box from an input device, and sets the predetermined condition based on the input data;

a printer performance information collection module that collects performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from each of the multiple printers specified by said printer specification module; and

a data input restriction module that restricts the input data in the data input box according to the performance information of each printer collected by said printer performance information collection module, said data input restriction module specifying a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said printer performance information collection module, and restricting the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information.

**Claim 26 (Canceled).**

**Claim 27 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said data input restriction module specifies a set of common performance information, which is common to all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said printer performance information collection module, and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of common performance information.

**Claim 28 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said data input restriction module comprises:

a mode changeover module that selectively changes over a working mode between a first mode and a second mode, the first mode specifying a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said printer performance information collection module, and restricting the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information, the second mode specifying a set of common performance information, which is common to all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said printer performance information collection module, and restricting the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of common performance information.

**Claim 29 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 28, wherein said mode changeover module comprises:

a module that displays a switch for the mode changeover on said display device, receives input data for operating the switch from said input device, and gives an instruction to change over the working mode based on the input data.

**Claim 30 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said condition setting module displays an option display box showing options possibly input in the data input box, together with the data input box, and sets one option selected among the options and specified from said input device as the predetermined condition, and

said data input restriction module prohibits at least part of the options included in the option display box from being specified from said input device, so as to restrict the input data in the data input box.

**Claim 31 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:

a group mapping module that maps a plurality of printers to each group,  
wherein said printer specification module specifies the multiple printers by a unit of group mapped by said group mapping module.

**Claim 32 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said printer specification module comprises a name display control module that displays names assigned to the specified multiple printers on said display device.

**Claim 33 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 32, wherein said printer specification module comprises an input control module that displays switches, which correspond to the respective printer names displayed by said name display control module and are operated to exclude the corresponding printers from the destinations of distribution, and receives operation data of the switches from said input device, and

said distributive output module comprises an output resource exclusion module that excludes a printer, which is determined that the corresponding switch has been operated based on the operation data received by said input control module, from an output resource of the print data.

**Claim 34 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said printer specification module comprises:

a priority order specification module that specifies an order of priority allocated to the specified multiple printers, and

said distributive output module carries out the distributive output by taking into account the order of priority specified by said priority order specification module.

**Claim 35 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim ~~26~~ 25, said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:

a performance decision module that determines whether or not each of the multiple printers specified by said printer specification module has a printing performance represented by the predetermined condition set by said condition setting module,

wherein said distributive output module comprises an output resource exclusion module that excludes a printer, which has been determined by said performance decision module not to have the printing performance, from an output resource of the print data.

**Claim 36 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 35, wherein said printer specification module comprises a name display control module that displays names of the specified multiple printers on said display device, and  
said name display control module comprises a module that prohibits distinctive display of the name of the printer, which is excluded by said output resource exclusion module.

**Claim 37 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 25, wherein said printer performance information collection module receives information regarding performances of the multiple printers from printer drivers provided for respective types of the multiple printers and collects the performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from the received information.

**Claim 38 (Currently Amended):** A distributed printing control method that controls distributed printing and comprises the steps of:

- (a) specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;
- (b) outputting print data, which is an object to be printed, to the multiple printers specified in said step (a) in a distributive manner,
- (c) causing a data input box for setting a predetermined condition relating to a printing performance of each printer to be displayed on a display device, receiving input data into the data input box from an input device, and setting the predetermined condition based on the input data;
- (d) collecting performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from each of the multiple printers specified in said step (a); and
- (e) restricting the input data in the data input box according to the performance information of each printer collected in said step (d),

wherein said step (e) specifies a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected in said step (d), and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information.

**Claim 39 (Canceled).**

**Claim 40 (Original):** A distributed printing control method in accordance with claim 38, wherein said step (e) specifies a set of common performance information, which is common to all the performance information of the respective printers collected in said step (d), and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of common performance information.

**Claim 41 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control method that specifies multiple printers as destinations of distribution and outputs print data, which is an object to be printed, to the specified multiple printers in a distributive manner, thus controlling distributed printing,

said distributed printing control method comprising steps corresponding to the modules included in a distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 28.

**Claim 42 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in which a computer program for controlling distributed printing is recorded, said computer program including program instructions for causing a computer to ~~attain~~ perform the functions of:

- (a) specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;
- (b) outputting print data, which is an object to be printed, to the multiple printers specified by said function (a) in a distributive manner,
- (c) causing a data input box for setting a predetermined condition relating to a printing performance of each printer to be displayed on a display device, receiving input data into the data input box from an input device, and setting the predetermined condition based on the input data;
- (d) collecting performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from each of the multiple printers specified by said function (a); and
- (e) restricting the input data in the data input box according to the performance information of each printer collected by said function (d),

wherein said function (e) specifies a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said function (d), and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information.

**Claim 43 (Canceled).**

**Claim 44 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said function (e) specifies a set of common performance information, which is common to all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said function (d), and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of common performance information.

**Claim 45 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said function (e) comprises the function of:

(e-1) selectively changing over a working mode between a first mode and a second mode, the first mode specifying a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said function (d), and restricting the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information, the second mode specifying a set of common performance information, which is common to all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said function (d), and restricting the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of common performance information.

**Claim 46 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 45, wherein said function (e-1) comprises the function of:

displaying a switch for the mode changeover on said display device, receiving input data for operating the switch from said input device, and giving an instruction to change over the working mode based on the input data.

**Claim 47 (Previously Presented):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said function (c) displays an option display box showing options possibly input in the data input box, together with the data input box, and sets one option selected among the options and specified from said input device as the predetermined condition, and

said function (e) prohibits at least part of the options included in the option display box from being specified from said input device, so as to restrict the input data in the data input box.

**Claim 48 (Previously Presented):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said computer program further causes the computer to attain the function of:

(f) mapping a plurality of printers to each group,  
wherein said function (a) specifies the multiple printers by a unit of group mapped by said function (f).

**Claim 49 (Previously Presented):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said function (a) comprises the function of:

(a-1) displaying names assigned to the specified multiple printers on said display device.

**Claim 50 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 49, wherein said function (a) comprises the function of:

(a-2) displaying switches, which correspond to the respective printer names displayed by said function (a-1) and are operated to exclude the corresponding printers from the destinations of distribution, and receiving operation data of the switches from said input device, and

said function (b) comprises the function of:

excluding a printer, which is determined that the corresponding switch has been operated based on the operation data received by said function (a-2), from an output resource of the print data.

**Claim 51 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42 50, wherein said function (a) comprises the function of:

(a-3) specifying an order of priority allocated to the specified multiple printers, and  
said function (b) carries out the distributive output by taking into account the order of priority specified by said function (a-3).

**Claim 52 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 43 42, wherein said computer program further causes the computer to attain the function of:



(g) determining whether or not each of the multiple printers specified by said printer specification function has a printing performance represented by the predetermined condition set by said function (c),

said function (b) comprises the function of:

excluding a printer, which has been determined by said function (g) not to have the printing performance, from an output resource of the print data.

**Claim 53 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 52, wherein said function (a) comprises the function of:

(h) displaying names of the specified multiple printers on said display device, and

said function (h) comprises the function of:

prohibiting distinctive display of the name of the printer, which is excluded by said output resource exclusion function.

**Claim 54 (Previously Presented):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 42, wherein said function (d) receives information regarding performances of the multiple printers from printer drivers provided for respective types of the multiple printers and collects the performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from the received information.

**Claim 55 (Original):** A computer program ~~that controls~~ product for use in controlling distributed printing, ~~comprising by causing a computer to attain the functions of:~~

a recording medium having program code recorded therein, said program code including

(a) program code for specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;

(b) program code for outputting print data, which is an object to be printed, to the multiple printers specified by said ~~function~~ program code (a) in a distributive manner,

(c) program code for causing a data input box for setting a predetermined condition relating to a printing performance of each printer to be displayed on a display device, receiving input data into the data input box from an input device, and setting the predetermined condition based on the input data;

(d) program code for collecting performance information with regard to the predetermined condition from each of the multiple printers specified by said ~~function~~ program code (a); and

(e) program code for restricting the input data in the data input box according to the performance information of each printer collected by said ~~function~~ program code (d),

wherein said program code (e) specifies a set of performance information, which includes all the performance information of the respective printers collected by said program code (d), and restricts the input data in the data input box within a range of the specified set of performance information.

**Claim 56 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus, comprising:

a first setting module that specifies multiple printers as destinations of distribution;  
a second setting module that sets paper information with regard to paper used for printing; and

a distribution control module that processes externally input print data based on the specification by said first setting module and the setting by said second setting module and outputs plural divisions of the print data, which satisfy the paper information, to the multiple printers specified as the destinations of distribution,

said distributed printing control apparatus supplying the plural divisions of the print data output from said distribution control module to the multiple printers via printer drivers provided for the respective printers,

said distributed printing control apparatus further comprising:

an information input module that receives information with regard to an unprintable area included in a paper area in each of the multiple printers specified by said first setting module; and

a printable area computation module that computes a printable area in the paper area, which is printable with any of the multiple printers, from the information of the respective printers received by said information input module,

wherein said distribution control module comprises:

an area fitting module that causes the plural divisions of the print data to be fit to the printable area computed by said printable area computation module.

**Claim 57 (Original):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 56, wherein said area fitting module comprises a margin correction module that corrects margins on each sheet of paper defined by the print data, based on the printable area computed by said printable area computation module.

**Claim 58 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 56, wherein said information input module receives the information from the printer drivers provided for the respective printers.

**Claim 59 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control apparatus in accordance with claim 56, wherein the multiple printers are connected via a computer network.

**Claim 60 (Original):** A distributed printing control method, comprising the steps of:

- (a) specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;
  - (b) setting paper information with regard to paper used for printing; and
  - (c) processing externally input print data based on the specification by said step (a) and the setting by said step (b) and outputting plural divisions of the print data, which satisfy the paper information, to the multiple printers specified as the destinations of distribution, said distributed printing control method supplying the plural divisions of the print data output in said step (c) to the multiple printers via printer drivers provided for the respective printers,
- said distributed printing control method further comprising the steps of:
- (d) receiving information with regard to an unprintable area included in a paper area in each of the multiple printers specified by said step (a); and
  - (e) computing a printable area in the paper area, which is printable with any of the multiple printers, from the information of the respective printers received in said step (d), wherein said step (c) comprises the step of:
    - (c1) causing the plural divisions of the print data to be fit to the printable area computed in said step (e).

**Claim 61 (Original):** A distributed printing control method in accordance with claim 60, wherein said step (c1) comprises the step of:

correcting margins on each sheet of paper defined by the print data, based on the printable area computed in said step (e).

**Claim 62 (Previously Presented):** A distributed printing control method in accordance with claim 60, wherein said step (b) receives the information from the printer drivers provided for the respective printers.

**Claim 63 (Currently Amended):** A computer readable recording medium in which a computer program is recorded, said computer program including program instructions for causing a computer to ~~attain~~ perform the functions of:

- (a) specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;
- (b) setting paper information with regard to paper used for printing; and
- (c) processing externally input print data based on the specification by said function (a) and the setting by said function (b) and outputting plural divisions of the print data, which satisfy the paper information, to the multiple printers specified as the destinations of distribution,

wherein the plural divisions of the print data output by said function (c) are supplied to the multiple printers via printer drivers provided for the respective printers,

said computer program further including program instructions for causing the computer to ~~attain~~ perform the functions of:

- (d) receiving information with regard to an unprintable area included in a paper area in each of the multiple printers specified by said function (a); and
- (e) computing a printable area in the paper area, which is printable with any of the multiple printers, from the information of the respective printers received by said function (d),  
wherein said function (c) comprises the function of:
  - (c1) causing the plural divisions of the print data to be fit to the printable area computed in said step (e).

**Claim 64 (Original):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 63, wherein said function (c1) comprises the function of:

correcting margins on each sheet of paper defined by the print data, based on the printable area computed by said function (e).

**Claim 65 (Previously Presented):** A computer readable recording medium in accordance with claim 63, wherein said function (b) receives the information from the printer drivers provided for the respective printers.

**Claim 66 (Currently Amended):** A computer program product, comprising causing a computer to attain the functions of:

a recording medium having program code recorded therein, said program code including

(a) program code for specifying multiple printers as destinations of distribution;

(b) program code for setting paper information with regard to paper used for printing;

and

(c) program code for processing externally input print data based on the specification by said ~~function~~ program code (a) and the setting by said ~~function~~ program code (b) and outputting plural divisions of the print data, which satisfy the paper information, to the multiple printers specified as the destinations of distribution,

wherein the plural divisions of the print data output by said ~~function~~ program code (c) are supplied to the multiple printers via printer drivers provided for the respective printers,

said ~~computer~~ program code further including ~~causing the computer to attain the functions of:~~

(d) program code for receiving information with regard to an unprintable area included in a paper area in each of the multiple printers specified by said ~~function~~ program code (a); and

(e) program code for computing a printable area in the paper area, which is printable with any of the multiple printers, from the information of the respective printers received by said ~~function~~ program code (d),

wherein said ~~function~~ program code (c) further includes ~~comprises the function of:~~

(c1) program code for causing the plural divisions of the print data to be fit to the printable area computed in said step (e).